



# Seasons and Cycles

Year level 5

## Curriculum Links

### History

- Identify points of view in the past and present (Yr 5, ACHHS104)
- Use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies (Yr 5, ACHHS106)

### Cross-Curriculum Priorities

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures
- Sustainability

## Resources

- A map of Australia, digital or paper based, showing latitude
- Copies of the proforma for a circular seasonal cycle (on page 18 or from the Shared Table Resource Library)

## Location

The classroom or out of doors

Duration:

30–45 minutes

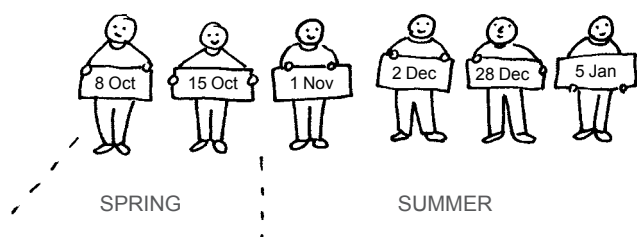
## Seasonal line-up

- The European calendar divides the year into four seasons: spring, summer, autumn and winter. This convention was first established in Northern Europe.
- Ask students whether they think we always have four seasons here where we live. What's their experience?
- Get students to line themselves up along one wall of the classroom, or similar if outside, according to the season of their birthday. Begin with early spring at one end, then have the line progress through spring, late spring, summer, autumn and winter, ending at late winter. Don't mention months or dates or define precise points between seasons – if you're a bit ambiguous, students will be forced to work out a continuum for themselves.
- Give them 2–3 minutes to make a seasonal birthday line-up.
- Did students find this task difficult? Were there difficulties defining the seasons?
- The definitions of spring, summer, autumn and winter mean different things to different people.
- Discuss your thoughts about how dates and seasons can change from year to year with the weather.
- Encourage anyone in the line-up who wants to move, to move.
- If you have the space, get the students to walk their line into a circle to show how the seasonal cycle of the year repeats itself.

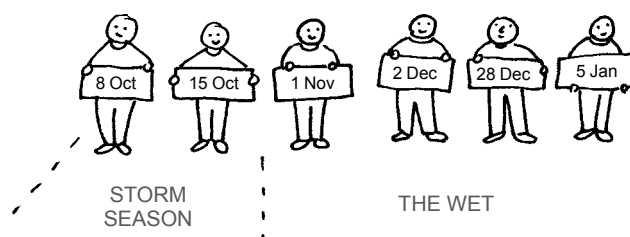
## Seasons and latitude

- As a class, look at a map of Australia and compare the latitude of different places.
- Does summer come earlier the further north you go, or the further south? What else affects the seasons? (Proximity to water bodies, for example.)
- Ask: If we were in Darwin/Hobart/any place on the other side of Australia your students know of, would our birthday seasonal line-up look the same? (Use climate data if you need to.)

HOBART, TASMANIA:



DARWIN, NORTHERN TERRITORY:



- Discuss what changes occur when we compare our line-up to another latitude. If we were in the northern hemisphere, our line-up would run the opposite way.
- Discuss and ask questions until your students see that seasons are not absolute, they depend on your location and climate.

'It is spring again. The  
 earth is like a child that  
 knows poems by heart.'

*Rainer Maria Rilke*

## Starting personal seasonal cycles

- Ask: what dictates the annual cycle? (The Earth's orbit around the Sun.)  
 If you need to review this concept, review it now.
- Provide each student with a seasonal cycle template (a template is provided for you on page 18 or in the Shared Table Resource Library).
- Working individually, students plot key moments on their circular calendar, such as their birthday and those of friends, term dates and events of personal importance, such as summer holidays, Chinese New Year, *Eid-ul-fitr*, Christmas, key sporting events or seasonal fairs and shows.
- Students don't need to be too specific about plotting dates; this activity is about understanding seasons rather than recording specific days within months.
- They can use symbols, colour-coding, icons, stickers or dots, and create a legend.
- Ask students to tell you about seasonal changes in the natural world. Different schools will pose different questions: When do the termites appear? What time of year was it when we planted the broad beans? When do our chickens moult? When the winds come, what season is it? What about the rains? When do we worry about frost on fruit tree blossom?
- Probe and tell stories with students and others, such as the kitchen and garden volunteers and wider community, to facilitate students building a personal picture of their knowledge of seasonal cycles in nature.
- On their seasonal cycles, students add any of the observations, events or stories that have personal meaning to them, such as when certain bush foods are ready or when favourite foods come into season. An example is provided on page 20.
- Students could create a food dial around the outside of their cycle with names or images of the fruit and vegetables available in each season. The circular format emphasises the cycle of the seasons, which a rectilinear calendar can disguise.

## Extension

- You might organise a collaboration at any point in this unit with a class in a different climate zone, such as another part of Australia. To find connections, try asking another Kitchen Garden School to partner with you via the Shared Table. Your exchange might take the form of a Skype call, or students in each class could take videos and post photos with questions for each other about the current season and footage of their gardens.

